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BIEBER'S 'RECKLESS' TWEET {page 08}

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Thursday, March 29, 2012

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RICARD LARMA/METRO

Against odds, parks among world's best

Philly's system named by Frommers among Top 10 despite funding levels that have remained stagnant for decades Leading advocate calls parks' annual funding 'tragedy' that hinders city's natural resource {page 02}

News

Vandals move from slashing to acid in NE

Cars in Lawncrest damaged by acidic substance Police already dealing with dozens of tire slashings {page 06}

Embracing the 'Delta Spirit'

One bar crawl, one show, many revelations for this indie band from San Diego {page 12}

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Fairmount Park beats odds as world-renowned

Philadelphia touted for some of the best parks in the world, despite chronic underfunding Support from city roughly same as early 1970s

PHOTO: RIKARD LARMA/METRO

▶ Frommers credited "an array of landscaped gardens and wooded areas."

▶ Artist Evan Schukis enjoyed the view from the park yesterday.

Travel website Frommers yesterday placed Philadelphia among the world's best cities for public parks, noting the scope of Fairmount Park's 9,200 acres and the wonderfully interwoven history of old mansions and museums.

"The parks are home to more than 200 historic buildings, America's oldest zoo, six golf courses, cycling trails, performance venues and an array of landscaped gardens and wooded areas," the website observed while ranking Philadelphia in its top 10 list.

But ask park advocates much closer to home, like Lauren Bornfield of the Philadelphia Parks Alliance, and they'll likely say the city's parks are like flowers that blossom without expensive fertilizer.

"Imagine how extraordinary our system would be and what could be possible and how maintained it would be if it was adequately funded," said Bornfield, executive director of the alliance. "The tragedy is that it's not."

It's no secret that the expansive Fairmount Park system has received the same level of funding — give or take $2 million or $3 million — for the past four decades. Since the early 1970s, the city has annually allocated $12 million to $15 million per year, according to the city's longtime Fairmount Park top official, Mark Focht.

Inflation has gradually forced cuts to maintenance, employment and programming. So how does Philadelphia rank with the world's best like Paris and Tokyo and Chicago? Bornfield credits what she calls "$5 million last year in sweat equity." Focht touts the city's partnerships with private donors.

"We have this extraordinary resource," Bornfield pleaded yesterday, echoing her annual message during the past several city budget seasons. "Let's leverage it and make kids healthy and fit and provide it for families and visitors and all Philadelphians."

BRIAN X. MCCRONE
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Steady funding

- Exact funding for city parks the last three years hasn't been available since the Fairmount Park Commission merged with the Department of Recreation.
- But Focht said yesterday that the park system received a small dose of good news in Mayor Michael Nutter's 2012-2013 budget proposal that would begin July 1 when Nutter held the line on funding for the first time in three years.
- He also noted capital spending in the next couple years that will expand the city's tree canopy by giving out thousands of free trees to property owners and improving safety measures like lighting at park and recreation facilities.

In the news

9

Philadelphia schools to be voted on for closure by the Schools Reform Commission at its meeting this evening. The city school district has shrunk by some 50,000 students in the last decade, according to reports. METRO

In the news

Tower hauled away for life

A tow-truck driver was convicted of first-degree murder yesterday for killing a competitor with his truck in 2010 after an argument over territory in Kensington. Glenn McDaniel mowed down Ray Santiago and drove repeatedly over his body after the two men argued, prosecutors said. The charge carries an automatic sentence of life in prison. METRO

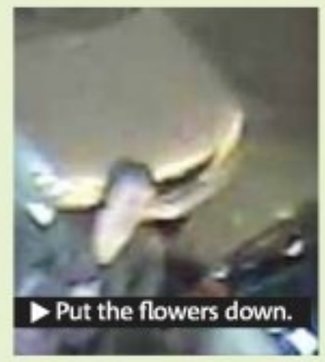
Thirsty for some of the hard stuff?

PHILADELPHIA. The sometimes-stodgy state Liquor Control Board has entered the 21st century with the unveiling of a free mobile app, "Fine Wine & Good Spirits."

The program, which cost $100,000 to develop, allows users to find the closest liquor store, peruse and purchase spirits or scan bottle bar codes for more information.

"It's quite honestly how our customers are communicating and looking for information, so it was the next step for us," said PLCB spokeswoman Stacey Witalec.

"Fine Wine & Good Spirits" is currently available for iPhones, and an Android version is in the works. METRO/AW



▶ Put the flowers down.

Thief has perennially bad habit

SOUTH PHILADELPHIA. Police are looking for an alleged perennial flower thief.

A woman was captured on surveillance video yanking 14 flowers out of a box attached to a porch on the 2100 block of South 10th Street and placing them in a large bag around 2 a.m. last Wednesday.

The victim told police the thefts occur every season after he plants new flowers. METRO/AW

Man shot in his own home

FRANKFORD. Police are investigating an early-morning home invasion.

Two armed men entered a house on the 1900 block of Fillmore Place shortly before 4 a.m. yesterday, police said. A 39-year-old man was shot once in the back and is in critical condition at Hahnemann Hospital.

A second man, 51, suffered a seizure after the gunmen tied him up and fled with $200 in cash. He was taken to Aria Health Frankford, where he is in stable condition. METRO/AW

Three attack on SEPTA bus

WEST PHILADELPHIA. Police are looking for three suspects involved in a strong-arm robbery on a SEPTA bus earlier this month.

The incident occurred March 14 at 4:30 p.m. near 52nd and Market streets. Police said the victim was initially waiting for the bus when a male approached him and said, "Where you from? ... Give me something or I'll call my crew." METRO

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Charm Bracelets	$5,500	Lavalieres	$8,000
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Ditishiem	$14,000	Illinois	$1,500	Tiffany & Co.	$15,000
Dudley	$11,500	Jules Jurgenson	$16,000	Ulyssee Nardin	$10,000
E. Howard & Co.	$12,000	LeCourfte	$6,000	Chronograph Watches	$16,500
		Longines	$13,000	Ladies Watches	$11,000

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The Court at the King of Prussia Mall
King of Prussia, PA
Upper Level Across from The Disney Store
Mon-Sat: 10am-9pm
Sunday: 11am-6pm

Hamilton Mall
Mays Landing, NJ
Lower Level Next To The Customer Service Information Booth
Mon-Sat: 10am-9pm
Sunday: 11am-6pm

SEPTA says union's crime figures are 'grossly distorted'

SEPTA and its transit police union went back and forth yesterday about crime reported on the system since officers worked off the job March 21.

Transit police went on strike after working without a contract for nearly a year. The union claimed Tuesday that 20 thefts and robberies occurred between March 21 and March 23 on the Broad Street Subway and Market-Frankford Elevated Line. In a statement, SEPTA called those figures "grossly distorted."

"This deliberate fear mongering by the FOTP's hired PR representative, distributing grossly distorted crime statistics to the media, is a disservice to the officers of the SEPTA transit police and Philadelphia police, and dishonors their sworn oaths as police officers," spokesman Richard Maloney said. A review of the official complaints by Metro showed three of the 20 incidents actually occurred on the system. Several others happened at retail stores or on the street.

▶ SEPTA transit police

SEPTA said there were six thefts, two robberies and one aggravated assault on the entire system between March 21 and 23, excluding a March 21 theft that occurred before the strike.

Anthony Ingargiola, spokesman for the union, claimed in response that their latest calculations showed 15 incidents instead of 20. He insisted, however, that property crime is still up since its 219 officers hit the picket lines and were replaced by Philadelphia police and contracted private security guards.

"We have no interest in intentionally fudging the numbers. If anybody should be questioned about lying about the data it should be SEPTA," Ingargiola said.

SOLOMON D. LEACH
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Lottery. Record pot

▶ Center City street vendor Atul Amin is as excited as anyone over the Mega Millions mania. The retailer who sells the winning ticket will win $1 million.

RIKARD LARMA/METRO

Mega Millions hits half a billion

No winner in the Mega Millions lottery drawing Tuesday night brought the pot to a record $500 million by last night. The next drawing is Friday and the payout will surely blow away the cash winning record of $390 million. The super lottery began in 2007. METRO

Santorum's lead in Pa. evaporates

PENNSYLVANIA. Republican presidential front-runner Mitt Romney has erased rival Rick Santorum's lead among voters in Santorum's home state, which holds a crucial primary next month, a poll yesterday showed.

Santorum, who represented the state in Congress for 16 years until he was defeated in a Senate election in 2006, saw his lead over Romney evaporate from 29 points to 2 points in the past month, according to a Franklin and Marshall College poll.

The primary election here takes place April 24, along with New York and Connecticut which Romney is favored to win.

If Santorum loses or scrapes by with a narrow win in Pennsylvania, he will come under pressure from senior Republicans to pull out of the race. REUTERS

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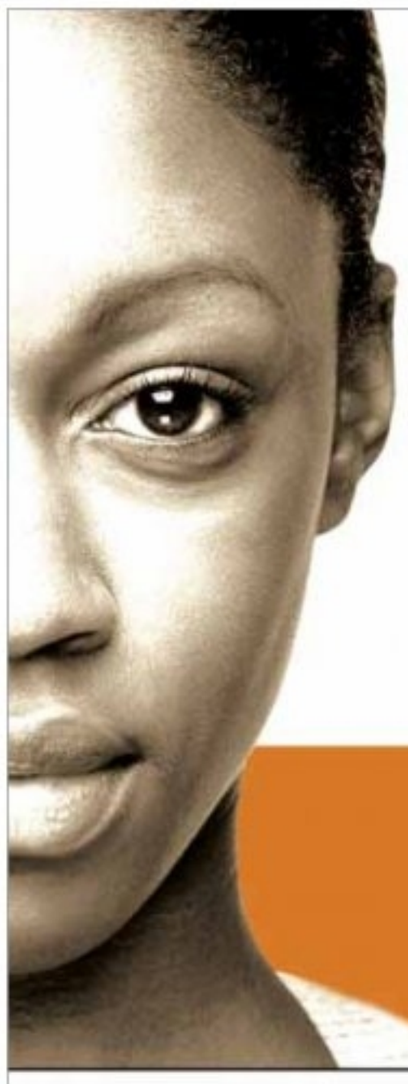

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LOCATIONS IN PHILADELPHIA & SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY

News in brief

Council talks property values

PHILADELPHIA. The proposed Actual Value Initiative, which entails basing property taxes on more accurate reassessed home values, dominated City Council's budget hearing again yesterday.

Several Council members expressed reservations at the uncertainties contained within the plan, like exactly how much more they could tell their constituents to expect paying and whether authorization for the homestead exemption for property owners who see tax increases over 15 percent will pass the state House.

"What my colleagues are saying in various ways in different languages is that we need to know what we're getting," Councilman Curtis Jones Jr. said. "The public isn't going for the okey dokey — not that that's what you're trying to do here — and I don't think either is this Council." METRO/AW

N. Philly woman gone two weeks

HUNTING PARK. A young woman who has not been heard from since St. Patrick's Day has been reported missing, police said yesterday.

Franchesca Alvarado, 22, was last seen by her sister at her home on the 4200 block of Darien Street, when she told her she was going to Atlantic City with a friend. She has not been seen since. METRO/AW

NE vandals move from slashes to acid

New vandalism of cars after months of tire slashings involve some sort of acidic substance

On the heels of a rash of tire slashings, residents in the Lower Northeast are looking for the person spraying an acidic substance on cars.

Police said about 16 cars were damaged early Wednesday on the 600 block of East Van Kirk Street after someone sprayed or poured an unknown corrosive chemical on several car doors, damaging the paint. Residents said this isn't the first time.

Mike Morales said both of his cars were damaged. He didn't find out until a relative told him they had seen the story on the news.

"It makes no sense," Morales said. "You got hard-working people and somebody's got nothing better to do."

Robin Clark said it would cost $1,500 to repair the damage to her car.

"I was frustrated because I thought they had caught one of the people," she said. "It's a whole brand new paint job." Clark said she thinks the vandal will continue until caught, especially in light of the publicity for the recent tire slashings in and around Mayfair.

SOLOMON D. LEACH
sleach@metro.us

RICARD LARMA/METRO

▶ Robin Clark, of Lawncrest, scrubs her damaged car.

Copycats lurk

Copycats have made the uncertainty of an end to the damage more frustrating.

- Police charged 21-year-old Quincy Kramer on Tuesday with slashing tires on Cottman Avenue, but they suspect other vandals are involved.
- "I'm thinking about parking in the back because the lights come on back there," Clark said.
- A few homes on the block have surveillance cameras, but police would not say whether the vandals were caught on tape. No description of the suspect or suspects has been given.

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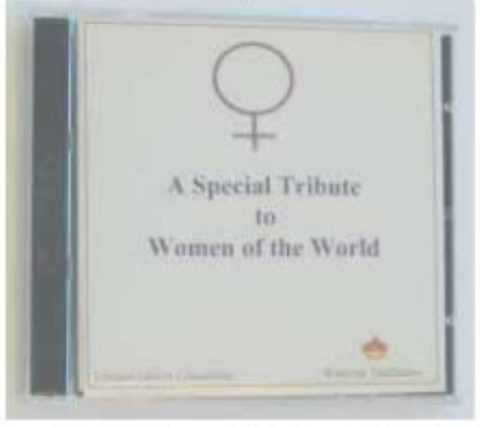

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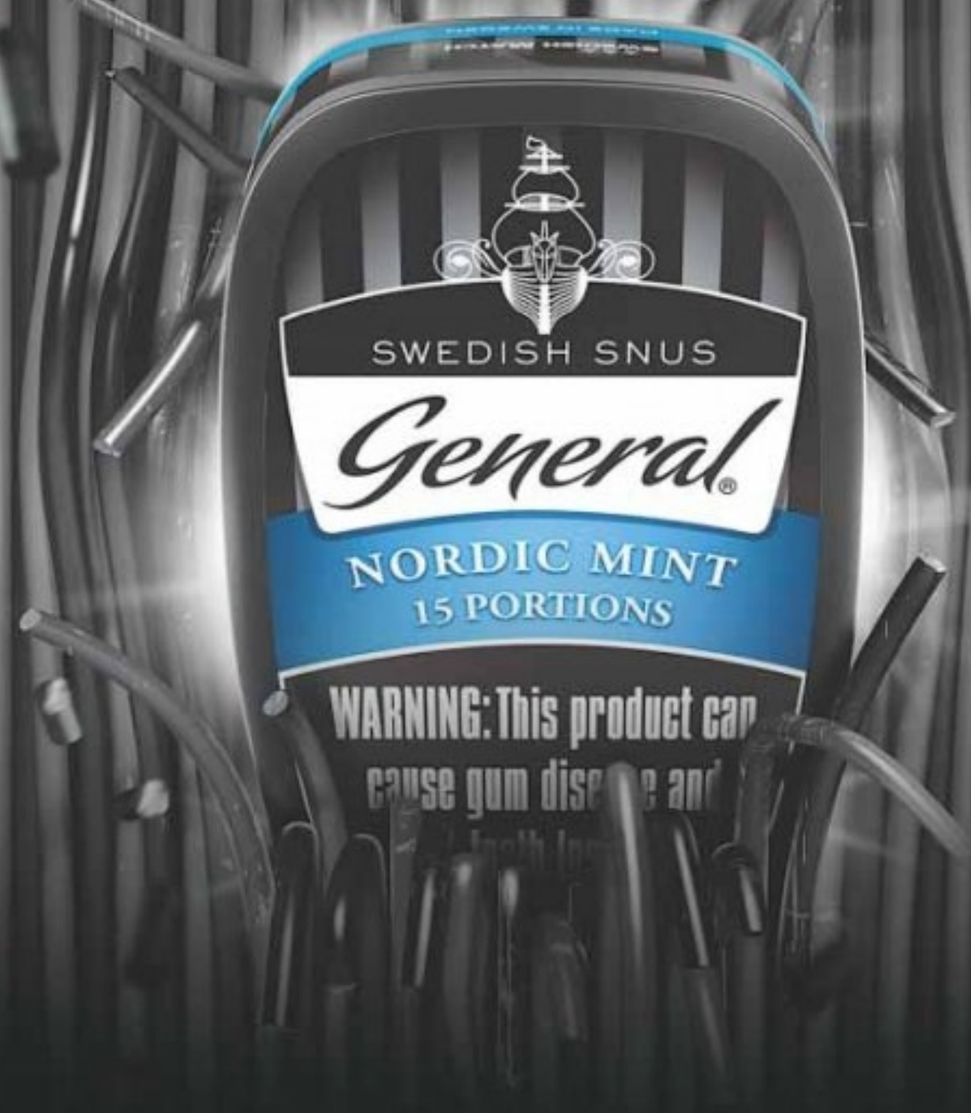

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myentertainment

THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

What's going on with Bethenny Frankel's marriage?

There are few reality TV stars who know how to game the system as well as **Bethenny Frankel**. Her ambition is awe-inspiring: She's risen from a throwaway contestant on 2005's "The Apprentice: Martha Stewart," to, despite not being an actual wife, one of the original five housewives on "The Real Housewives of New York City." From there, she wrote several New York Times best-selling books, starred in two spin-offs, "Bethenny Getting Married?" and "Bethenny Ever After," and founded the company Skinnygirl Cocktails, which she sold last year for an alleged $120 million dollars.

But is she so driven that she's letting her marriage to husband **Jason Hoppy** suffer?

That's what In Touch is reporting. They say that Hoppy has moved out of their New York City apartment and is staying at a nearby hotel. They report that Hoppy is claiming he ditched the $5 million Tribeca condo he shares with Frankel and their 23-month-old daughter, Bryn, because of renovations. But a source thinks he also left because he's fed up with Bethenny's diva behavior. "The fighting has gotten worse," the source tells In Touch. Apparently, Frankel has become overly obsessed with the launch of her L.A.-based talk show. "Her energy has been nervous and neurotic," the source says. "He can't take it anymore, so he's been doing everything on his own."

Or, this drama could just be fabricated in order for fans to train their attention back on Frankel in time for her talk show, set to launch in September. She's witchy that way.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

What's next? 'Bethenny Getting Divorced'?

▶ Bieber

Bieber is slapped with Twitter lawsuit

Justin Bieber's latest Twitter antics are causing him some legal trouble. Bieber posted a random phone number — minus the final digit — and wrote, "Call me right now." Two Texas residents reportedly received more than 1,000 phone calls and are now suing the Canadian pop star for damages due to "reckless behavior," according to Hollyscoop. What kind of damages are we talking about? They're reportedly after tickets to a Bieber concert, an apology and an endorsement of an online business run by one of the plaintiffs, among other things.

Can a celebrity do anything outside of the straight and narrow these days and not get sued?

The feed ...

▶ Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

Today, Paris Hilton is on the move, Jimmy Fallon is coming clean, Katy Perry wants you to be skeptical and Seth MacFarlane isn't a fan of redheads.

@ParisHilton
At the airport about to take off to Sydney! Haven't been to Australia in a long time, so I'm very excited for this trip! Love it there!

@jimmyfallon
I once was talked into getting a perm. (I was in college & it was free.)

@katyperry
don't believe in the hype.

@SethMacFarlane
There's nothing more grungy-looking than a redheaded person in a '70s movie.

Hilton

Talking points

Is Megan Fox knocked up?

After answering a slew of parenting-related questions while promoting "Friends with Kids," **Megan Fox** is reportedly expecting her first child with husband **Brian Austin Green**, according to Star magazine. "They just found out," a source claims, "and are incredibly excited." The happy couple won't be sharing the news just yet, though, the source warns: "It's still early, so they are only telling close friends and family members."

▶ Mama Fox?

Williams and Segel: K-I-S-S-I-N-G

After reportedly dating quietly for several months, **Michelle Williams** and **Jason Segel** stepped out in public as a couple for the first time, taking a post-dinner stroll in Brooklyn, according to Us Weekly. "He put his arm around her and made her laugh as they walked," a source says. "[They] seemed very relaxed." And Segel was spotted the next day bonding with Williams' 6-year-old daughter, Matilda. The source adds that the couple is "trying to make it work. She hasn't been this happy in a long time."

Kutcher gets new 'Two and a Half' deal

Before "Two and a Half Men" can get renewed for another season, producers have to strike a deal with new star **Ashton Kutcher**, whose contract only covered one season, according to Hollyscoop. "I don't see any reason to continue without him," the show's creator, **Chuck Lorre**, says. "He's a really nice man and he's a really easygoing guy; he's very relaxed and very professional. He shows up and he's ready to work; he's prepared and he brings it." He's also already the highest-paid actor on the show, earning a reported $700,000 per episode. Of course, **Charlie Sheen** was pulling in $1.25 million an episode before he was fired.

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When Joan Rivers met 50 Cent

1. Kristin Cavallari showed off her baby bump leaving the Bagatelle restaurant on Tuesday in Los Angeles.

2. Florence Welch from Florence and the Machine performed at Casino de Paris on Tuesday in Paris.

3. Raven-Symone made her Broadway debut in "Sister Act" at the Broadway Theatre on Tuesday in New York City.

4. Rihanna attended a photocall for her new film "Battleship" at The Corinthia Hotel on Wednesday in London.

5. Joan Rivers and **50 Cent** attended the 50 Cent Street King Ad campaign shoot at the Planet Fitness in Harlem on Tuesday.

6. Rachel Zoe and actress **Molly Sims** arrived at the Valentino Rodeo Drive Flagship store opening on Tuesday in Beverly Hills.

1: JB LACROIX/WIREIMAGE
2: DAVID WOLFF - PATRICK/REDFERNS VIA GETTY IMAGES
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10 Reasons to hit the movies this weekend

2 'Mirror Mirror'
Tarsem Singh puts his surrealist spin on the Snow White legend. Julia Roberts plays the evil queen whose mirror-mirror-on-the-wall has the gall to tell her she's no longer the fairest of them all.

3 'The Hunger Games'
Potter and the sparkly vamps had their time. Now, a post-apocalyptic teenage huntress takes center stage as a volunteer in her county's annual Hunger Games, in which two teens from every district must fight to the death an act of gratitude towards the rulers of their country, Panem.

4 '21 Jump Street'
Based on the '80s TV series, this one stars Jonah Hill and Channing Tatum as two less-than-slick police officers who go undercover in an attempt to bust a high school drug ring.

5 'Jeff, Who Lives at Home'
By now, you'd think we'd be sick of seeing Jason Segel play a shorts-wearing manchild who lives in his mom's basement. And yet, we're not at all.

6 'John Carter'
In Disney's adaptation of Edgar Rice Burroughs' novels, Taylor Kitsch plays a Civil War vet who can't catch a break: He ends up on Mars, gets taken prisoner by giants and then should probably go back and save the princess after he finally escapes.

7 'A Thousand Words'
Eddie Murphy angers a spiritual guru, inciting a curse — or a blessing, if that's your bag, hippie — that gives him only 1,000 words to speak before he dies.

8 'Silent House'
Supposedly based on a true story, this low-budget haunted house horror flick tells the story of a father and daughter renovating an old cottage — until the weird noise coming from the top floor becomes the priority.

9 'Project X'
Shot hand-held by a cast of unknowns, this one — like every great high school film — is about nerds who conquer all by throwing a rager.

10 'Dr. Seuss' The Lorax'
Zac Efron, Danny DeVito, Taylor Swift and Ed Helms voice the central characters of the beloved environmentalist children's story about the extinction of the "truffula trees."

METRO

Must-see

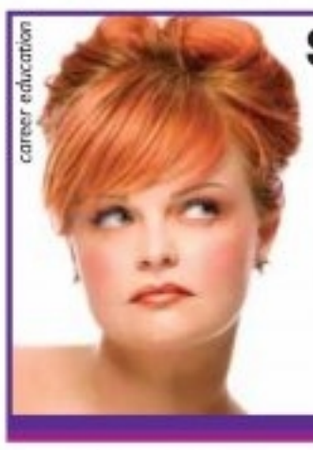
COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

▶ Sam Worthington, more like "Dash(ing man) of the Titans." That doesn't work, does it?

'Wrath of the Titans'

Sam Worthington and Liam Neeson get all mythological on you again in this sequel to "Clash of the Titans." Based on the ads we've seen, the people behind this movie are more ambitious with their special effects than they are with their titling. Seriously, what's next, "'Stache of the Titans"?

career education



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Drinking in the new 'Delta Spirit'

Delta Spirit singer Matt Vasquez loves his whiskey and might not take requests anymore. The group hosted — and wholeheartedly participated in — an open-invite bar crawl with a few hundred fans through Brooklyn last month that ended with a private, intimate show.

The unique event, which promoted the release of the band's third and self-titled album, afforded fans the opportunity to drink in the band's new sound.

As fans downed spirits inside the pubs while listening to selections from "Delta Spirit," band members chatted candidly with them about guitar choices and their departure from the rootsy feel of their first two releases.

"We really didn't know what to expect by this," says Vasquez while having a cigarette outside the final bar on the crawl. "We showed up late to the first bar. ... We got text messages from people saying, 'Hey, man. It's packed. You better get here quick,' and that couldn't be more encouraging."

The band wasn't shy about taking pictures or hanging out with fans during the event.

"We need more whiskey on this stage," Vasquez called out during the performance later.

Meanwhile, a fan's continuous shouting of "Play 'St. Francis!'" finally caught the attention of Vasquez who agreed to play the song. However, he paused and smiled midway through as he blanked on a verse. "F— it. I'm drunk," he said, after humming his way through the verse. But he belted out the rest of the song with full force, much to the fans' joy. "That's what happens when you take requests."

It was a testament to the band's character, which doesn't let anything interfere with putting on a riveting show. And an indication that the band's new sound fits right in with the feel of their older material.

"I think we're hungrier than ever to play energetic music," says Vasquez.

MATT WICKALL

▶ Delta Spirit play Friday at Union Transfer (1026 Spring Garden St.). For more info, visit www.utphilly.com.

An evolving sound

While walking between bars on the pub crawl, Vasquez spoke of the band's effort to establish its modern rock sound with the new album.

"There's a million ways you can take a song, and we're trying to go in a way that felt more like the 21st century," Vasquez says. "We've always been headed in this direction. It's not like we made a crazy left turn. It's really just ... the next step forward."

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
michael.naughton@metro.us

TV watch list

'The Pauly D Project'

REALITY. "Jersey Shore" shenanigans don't stop when the boardwalk T-shirt stands have shuttered for the season. Pauly D parlays his GTL infamy into a solo spin-off series documenting his life as a DJ, with pals in tow. **Series premiere, 10:30 p.m., MTV**

'The Big Bang Theory'

COMEDY. Leonard Nimoy lends his voice to a Spock action figure when Sheldon needs help resolving a "Star Trek"-related moral dilemma. **8 p.m., CBS**

'Community'

COMEDY. Too bad Dean Pelton stole Shirley and Pierce's idea to open a sandwich shop on campus. Now that Subway has set up shop at Greendale, we're going to have that "$5 foot-long" jingle stuck in our heads all day long. **8 p.m., NBC** ● AMBER RAY

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Does it matter who initiates sex?

Shrink Wrap

DR. JANE GREER
HEALTH.METRO.US

Recently engaged Halle Berry and Olivier Martinez are still in the midst of their romance, so the question of who makes the first move toward sex is probably a nonissue for now. But give it a little time. Sometimes all it takes is one rejection for people to start keeping score of who initiated and when. The big question is, how much does it matter?

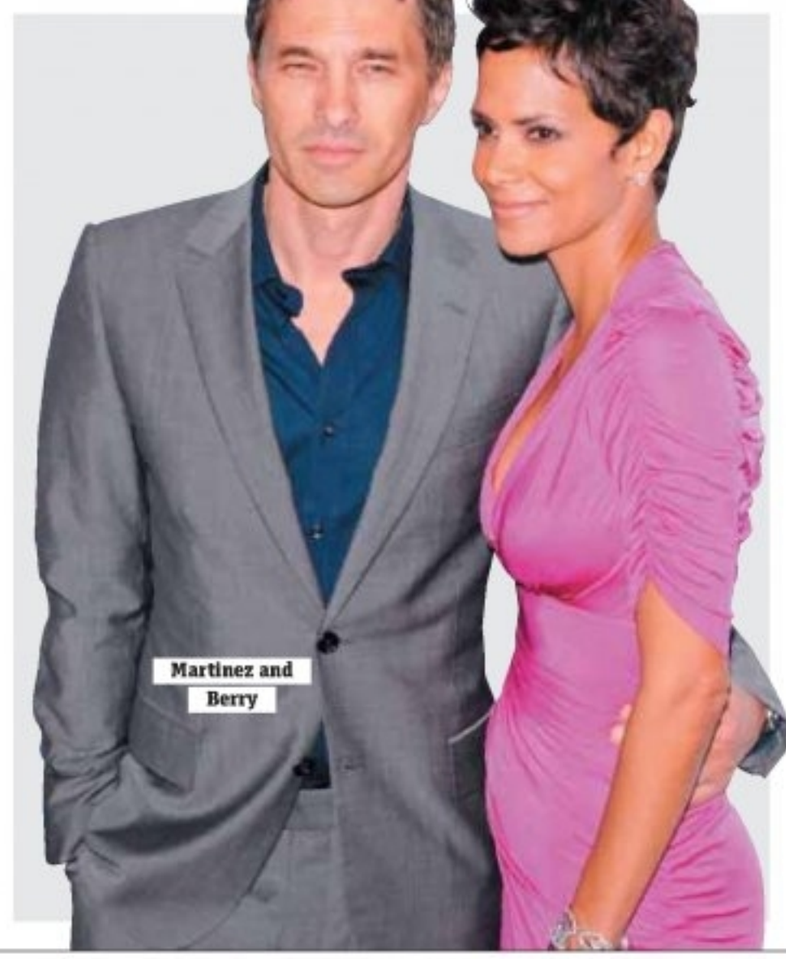
For many people, that first overture toward intimacy holds a lot of meaning because it is proof of your partner's love and your desirability. When that person don't make a move, it can leave you feeling unwanted and asking: Is it me? Because this could lead to your getting angry or sensitive, you might decide to hold back from initiating making love yourself. Before you know it, you can be in a sexual standoff.

Quoted

"Even if your partner doesn't appear interested, it is always worth reaching out. You can still be in the mood even if you partner isn't — sometimes one person's desire can ignite another's."
DR. JANE GEER

Don't take it personally. There are many possible reasons your partner isn't in the mood that have absolutely nothing to do with you: Maybe he or she had a hard day at work; maybe he or she is feeling pressure from a family member, whether it is a young child or an elderly parent; maybe he or she really does have a headache. And don't forget about that heavy dinner you just had. If you want some clarity, be direct and ask your partner if something is bothering him or her.

It is most important to be true to yourself and your own desires. Even if your partner doesn't appear interested, it is always worth reaching out. You can still be in the mood even if you partner is not — sometimes one person's desire can ignite another's. Even if sparks don't fly that night, take it as an opportunity to plan another time for a sexual romp. And keep in mind that it does not mean your lover doesn't want to do it with you ever — just not that night. If you can toughen your emotional skin, you can better enjoy the skin you're in.



Martinez and Berry

Sex is a give and take. If you are open to sharing the role of who makes it happen, you are likely to have much more sexual intimacy in your relationship — no matter how long you've been together.

— Relationship expert **Dr. Jane Greer** *is the creator of* ***"Shrink Wrap"*** *– national commentary on what we can learn from celebrity relationships – and host of* ***"Let's Talk Sex"*** *at* ***Healthylife.net.*** *Her book,* ***"What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship,"*** *is available nationwide.*

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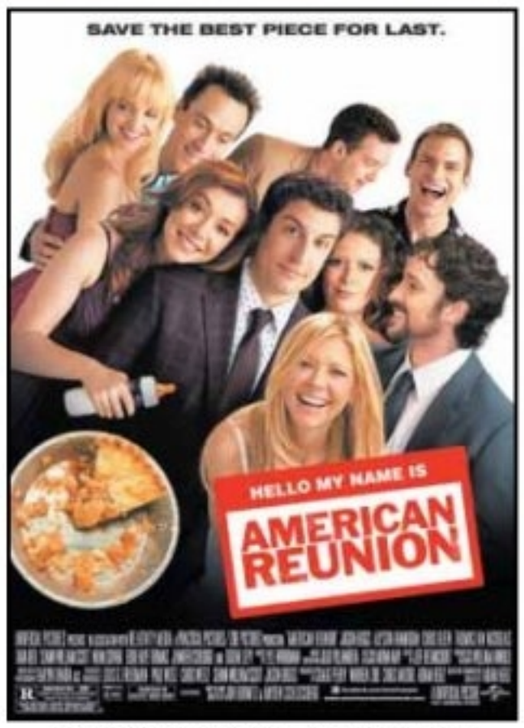

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Letters

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Trayvon Martin: Don't blame guns

RE: "SELF-DEFENSE DOESN'T MEAN KILLING KIDS": Zimmerman would have attempted to kill Martin regardless of what weapon he used. If Martin was stabbed or beaten, should we then outlaw knives, clubs, baseball bats and sticks of all sorts? Gun laws, although well-intentioned, do not deter criminals from committing crimes — only innocents from protecting themselves. John Stossel asked prison inmates if they would prefer more or less gun laws. They all answered more gun laws because criminals don't follow the law anyway. Gun laws are nearly impossible to enforce. Criminals would much rather attack a person they believe to be unarmed than an armed person.
KELLY DONNOE, VIA E-MAIL

Ms. White's comment is in itself a contradiction: She points out the extreme and unacceptable behaviors of Zimmerman but suggests the solution to be abolishing gun ownership for "ordinary" citizens. George Zimmerman is not an ordinary citizen, and generalizations of this kind are very dangerous.
D.D.FRANK, VIA E-MAIL

Quit placing blame, right-wing edition

It seems like the majority of letters every week consist of Republicans said this or Democrats spent that, in nonstop back-and-forth bickering. I think we can all agree that the government is really bad at making everyone happy. Why is it then that they are tasked with spending everyone's money? Shouldn't we be asking ourselves if it's time to kick out the middle man, and begin to spend our money as we so choose, as individuals?
HANS HAUGEN, VIA E-MAIL

I so tire of reading about the president this, the president that. It's Bush, it's Obama. It's because of both that my country is in the shape it's in! Let's just fix it. Wars and giving to every Dick and Harry out there is what has our country in finance trouble. Bush started wars, but Obama hasn't stopped them. Now Obama is talking about going in to other places. Does Obama really want to end this? Let's be real.
BLANCA HERNANDEZ, VIA E-MAIL

Democrats voted for wars, tax cuts too!

RE: "IT'S GOING TO TAKE A LOT OF TIME AND MONEY TO FIX WHAT THE REPUBLICANS HAVE BROKEN": I see that my letter about Obama blaming everything on Bush has brought out the liberal Obama excuse squad. From 2007 to 2009, Congress was controlled by the Democrats. What has to be fixed is not a lot of money but less spending by our government.
IGOR MANNIKUS, VIA E-MAIL

The Supreme Court must stay supreme

RE: "WILL OBAMACARE VERDICT SWAY THE NOV. ELECTIONS?": Of course the Supreme Court has too much power. That's why they're called the Supreme Court! Why have a group of people in a position that ultimately shapes the legal aspect of the country and give them limited powers? No matter how much people complain about the government having "too much power," the fact remains that the Supreme Court is a part of the process that has maintained peace and justice here for years. **ELLIOTT BAILEY, VIA E-MAIL**

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words.
Metro reserves the right to edit all letters.
Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** It's good that you are a courageous individual, but you need to be able to distinguish between bravery and just plain foolhardiness. Don't try to buck the odds.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** There's a chance you could get in way over your head if you challenge someone in a debate who has a firmer grip on the facts than you do. Know when to back off.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** If you already have your hands full trying to keep your own affairs in order, don't additionally attempt to sort out another person's muddled affairs. Mind your own beeswax.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** When one of your important goals is at stake, keep everyone else at bay. Unfortunately, taking on a partner could be more of a hindrance than a help.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** When it comes to important career matters, don't rely on anybody else to handle things. If you delegate your responsibilities to a party who makes a mistake, you'll only have yourself to blame.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** Go ahead and let your hair down at a social gathering, but be careful not to wear out your welcome. To be on the safe side, be among the first to leave.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** Even if it takes a bit of doing, be as tolerant as possible with certain companions who are not in harmony with your goals and purposes. Make allies, not enemies.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Generally, things that we criticize in others are reflections of our own shortcomings. Instead of trying to correct the flaws of your colleagues, work on your personal imperfections.

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** Be particularly careful about getting yourself involved in a financial arrangement that is outside of your particular field of expertise. The lesson you learn could be an expensive one.

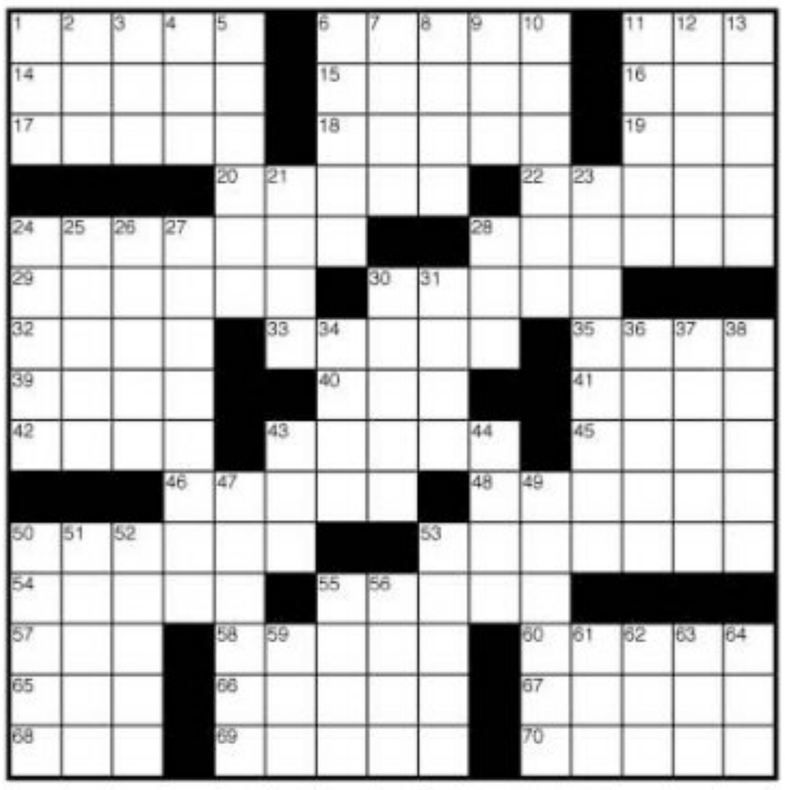
♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** There is nothing wrong with looking out for your self-interest, provided you're not trying to feather your nest at the expense of someone else.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Should an associate come to you requesting assistance, by all means do what you can to help. Just don't volunteer to take on something that's beyond your capabilities.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Avoid joining an activity with friends that is much too costly for your wallet to handle. Simply knowing it is beyond your means would put a damper on it for you. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

Across
1 Vice __
6 Utter chaos
11 Daystar
14 Zen master's poem
15 Fully conscious
16 MD employer
17 Tempus __
18 Board, as a bus (2 wds.)
19 Gas-station freebie
20 Amherst sch.
22 Beat it!
24 Speak haltingly
28 Archimedes' yell
29 Rostand hero
30 High-IQ group
32 Expansive story
33 Off-the-wall
35 Yield, as territory
39 Head support
40 Potato st.
41 Auto pioneer __ Benz
42 Morales of "La Bamba"
43 Just yak
45 Figurehead's place
46 Nostrils
48 Very spiny cactus
50 Desert "lake"
53 Sharply
54 Woody Allen movie
55 Wall climbers
57 Rapper __ Kim
58 Sahara wanderer
60 Wished fervently
65 __ kwon do
66 Eddy or Allman
67 "Farm" follower
68 Tack on
69 Intended
70 Cut drastically

Down
1 Channels 2-13
2 __ de cologne
3 Tractor-trailer
4 Enjoy Vail
5 Fall
6 Helga's hubby
7 Blows away
8 Cauldrons
9 Incan treasure
10 Population count
11 Dividend earner
12 Kayak kin
13 __ Shearer of "Escape"
21 Pet plea
23 Kook
24 Public tiff
25 Pounds the keys
26 Chilean port
27 Straits off Michigan
28 Wrap up
30 Golden-touch king
31 Q.E.D. part
34 Colleen's home
36 Baseball great __ Combs
37 Facetious
38 Longtime Denver QB
43 Opposite of post-
44 Livy's "Lo!"
47 Chair plan
49 Pipes down
50 Republic near Italy
51 Work by Homer
52 Really miffed
53 Came to the rescue
55 Mosque official
56 Windmill blade
59 Ja, to Jacques
61 Wildcat strike
62 Princess perturber
63 Gasthaus cubes
64 Homer's word



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SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

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			1		3			6
		3				8		
5			8		2			
	7		9					
3		6	2		1		8	
	9					5	2	4

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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Reid admits he 'goofed'

Head coach says he overestimated young linebackers last season Eagles boss praised Ryans' leadership, thinking Super Bowl in 2012 McCoy's contract will get worked out

Andy Reid met with reporters yesterday at the owners meetings and chatted with reckless abandon — at least as close as that comes for the usually tight-lipped coach.

The Eagles boss admitted that he "goofed" last season after deciding his young linebacking corps was good enough to run the complex Wide Nine scheme.

"We had young guys. I knew that going in," Reid told reporters in Florida. "That's my responsibility. I goofed on that one. I thought that the young guys on defense could get where they ended up getting by the end of the season sooner, particularly the middle of the defense, linebackers and safeties. I expected the offense to carry us through."

Last week, the Eagles traded for Pro Bowl middle linebacker DeMeco Ryans, an instant Band-Aid. Reid has already compared Ryans' intangibles to those of famed Eagle Brian Dawkins. So naturally the coach expects to compete for a Super Bowl championship in 2012.

"Yes. That's what makes it exciting," Reid said. "I think we have a good group coming back. As long as we build on what we did [at the end of] last year, which I think is important in this case."

MIKE GREGER
mgreger@metro.us

RIKARD LARMA/METRO

▶ Reid is back for his 14th season leading the Birds.

What about a new contract for Shady?

Andy Reid also commented on LeSean McCoy's impending contract situation.

The star running back is in the last year of his rookie deal, which is the exact same situation DeSean Jackson was in last season, and many expect McCoy to sit out training camp until an extension is finalized. Jackson and McCoy also share the same agent, Drew Rosenhaus.

While Reid stated that each situation is completely different, he also expressed confidence that a new deal would get done.

RIKARD LARMA/METRO

"We like LeSean and we think he's good for our organization, team and on the field and off the field," the coach said. "We'll work something out there as we go. Listen, these things take a little bit of time, that's how it works, but it'll work out." METRO

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Worley, Phillies get roughed up

The Twins jumped all over Vance Worley early and often in an 11-7 romp yesterday in Grapefruit League play.

Worley (1-3), making his fifth start this spring, allowed five earned runs (11 total) on 11 hits in four innings. The Twins led 4-0 after the first two frames, thanks to two home runs.

Jimmy Rollins put the Phillies on the board with an RBI single in the third. The shortstop finished 2-for-3 with a run scored. The star of the show was nonroster invite Henry Luna. The outfielder slugged a solo homer in the ninth and went 3-for-5.

The Phillies dropped their spring record to 11-14, while the Twins improved to 15-12. Cole Hamels gets the start today against Tampa Bay.

METRO

▶ Worley

New swag

Back home, the Phillies unveiled new merchandise at the Majestic Clubhouse Store at the ballpark:

- **Phillies-branded Panini press and BBQ branders** can etch the team's trademark "P" logo into your favorite sandwich or hamburger.
- **Yoga mats and Phanatic dangle hats** are fun new items. Mats are pink and the dangle is a Phanatic likeness ready to plop on your head.
- **OYO figurines** are LEGO-like (can't say LEGO due to copyright) toys in the mold of Phillies players. Ten different players are available.
- **Disposable diapers** with the Phillies logo.

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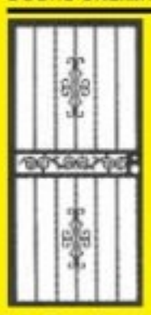

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Before this season is over, at least half the league will change its closer at some point.

Maybe it will be due to injury, or maybe it will be because the normal closer gets rocked for a week straight. The bottom line is fantasy owners put more emphasis on the closer's role than managers.

Also, you don't have to be Sandy Koufax to be able to get three outs consistently. We've seen mediocre, or even bad pitchers, rack up 30-40 saves in any given season. Here are some candidates to acquire saves cheaply this season:

Coors light

Rafael Betancourt is coming at a major discount because he pitches in Colorado and he's never been a full-time closer before. Of course, he also has a career 3.18 ERA and 1.08 WHIP. Most importantly, he has absolutely no competition behind him for the job.

The handcuff

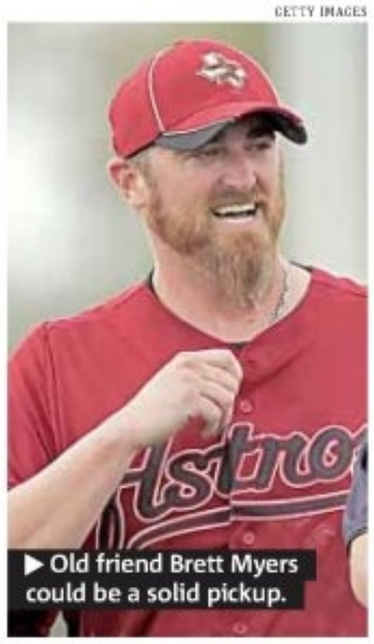
Javy Guerra is the Dodgers' unquestioned closer. However, setup man Kenley Jansen has the better stuff. We can draft both because Jansen will still be a fantasy asset even if he's not getting saves.

Jansen will get fluky wins and help in ERA, WHIP and strikeouts. The same strategy can be employed with guys like Huston Street-Luke Gregerson and Matt Thornton-Addison Reed.

Less is more

Yes, we know that Jim Johnson, Sean Marshall, Brett Myers, Matt Capps and Brandon League aren't that good. But they're also set up to get a decent leash as the closer and one or two, or even three, of them are going to run with the job. Someone from the "less talented" tier will end up with 30-plus saves.

GETTY IMAGES



▶ Old friend Brett Myers could be a solid pickup.

Basketball sleepers

Want to steal a fantasy title off the waiver wire? Take a look at these guys:

1. **Eric Gordon, SG, NO —** Gordon was dropped in most leagues due to his chronic knee issues. But he's in a contract year and is desperate to prove that he can sustain some health — even if it's only for a month.

2. **CJ Watson, PG, CHI —** Derrick Rose admitted that his groin was actually bleeding when he originally injured it. He still hasn't been cleared for contact, leaving Watson with at least another week of value.

Do You Want to Learn More About How to protect Your Health?

The University of Pennsylvania is recruiting volunteers for the Triumphant Living Collaborative Program. This research study is an opportunity for African American men and women to learn about the impact of health behaviors on disease risk.

If you are age 18 or older and live in Philadelphia, call to learn more about the study and to find out if you are eligible.

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Penn Medicine

Medical Research

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metro health

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at **215-717-2694** or **BRIAN.LYDON@METRO.US**

Is your **skin red** around your **forehead, cheeks, chin** and **nose?**

Do you also get **red bumps** similar to acne **on your face?**

The person depicted is a model used only for illustrative purposes. Rosacea added for effect.

If so, please contact us to learn more about our research study of an investigational medication for adults with papulopustular rosacea.

Papulopustular rosacea *is a type of rosacea marked by facial redness and acne-like bumps.*

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- Have moderate to severe papulopustular rosacea
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For more information, call Paddington Testing Company,
215-563-7330

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Are you 55 or older and interested in participating in research?

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For more information and to find out if you are eligible to enroll, call 215-746-8429.

Penn Medicine

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Get all the exciting details at: KomenPhiladelphia.org/TeamHart

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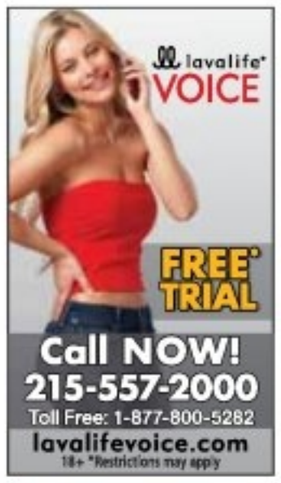

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